



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22303-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10 000,656	02/06/2002	Murali Rajagopalan	20002 0220	6120

23517 7590 06/10/2003

SWIDLER BERLIN SHEREFF FRIEDMAN, LLP
3000 K STREET, NW
BOX 1P
WASHINGTON, DC 20007

EXAMINER

BUTTNER, DAVID J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1712

DATE MAILED: 06/10/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/066,636

Applicant(s)

RAJAGOPALAN, MURALI

Examiner

David Buttner

Art Unit

1712

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 16-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:

- I. Claims 1-15, drawn to golf balls with ionomer + polyamide mantle,
classified in class 473, subclass 373.
- II. Claims 16-21, drawn to golf balls with ionomer + polyamide cover,
classified in class 473, subclass 385.

Inventions I and II are unrelated. In the instant case inventions I and II have the ionomer + polyamide in different positions in the ball. Secondly, the ionomer in group II must be fully neutralized (i.e., 100 %). The ionomer of group I has no such limitation. Inventions are unrelated if it can be shown that they are not disclosed as capable of use together and they have different modes of operation, different functions, or different effects (MPEP § 806.04, MPEP § 808.01).

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

During a telephone conversation with John Mulgrew on 5/30/03 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of I, claims 1-15. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 16-21 withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Non-elected claims 16-21 require "fully neutralized" ionomers. This is not present in the specification or in the parent applications. If these claims are not cancelled, the application must be redesignated as a CIP and a new oath supplied (see

MPEP 201.06 c "Examination"). The parent applications call for "at least a portion of the acid groups are neutralized" and preferably 20-80% neutralized. This is not basis for 100% neutralization. Those in the art know 100% neutralized ethylene/acid ionomers are not usually processable (see paragraph 12 of 2003/0050373). A clear teaching of "full neutralization" would have been necessary in the parent, because one of ordinary skill would have assumed 100% neutralization is intractable.

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 6 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claim 6's polyisoprene is not functionalized or a copolymer and therefore cannot depend from claim 3.

Claim 13's polyphenylene oxide, polyphenylene sulfide, PTFE and olefinic homopolymers are not functionalized or copolymers and therefore cannot depend from claim 12.

Claims 1 and 7-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over the Tanaka '663 Patent.

Tanaka exemplifies (comparative 4) a three piece golf ball having a nylon/ionomer intermediate layer and a nylon/ionomer cover. The nylon qualifies as non-ionomer.

Claims 1 and 7-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over the J08322962 Patent.

The reference is equivalent to Tanaka '663.

Claims 1, 7-9 and 11-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over the Viollaz Patent.

Viollaz exemplifies (table 3) a three piece golf ball having an intermediate layer that is a blend of ionomer and polyetheramide. A polyetheramide is a block polyamide polymer. The cover is a thermoplastic that can be a non-ionomer such as polyurethane or amide block polymer (col. 4 line 20).

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-15 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-22 of U.S. Patent No. 6353058. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the patent also claims three layer golf balls having on

intermediate layer of nylon and ionomer. The cover is thermoplastic or thermoset (claims 14). The specification defines these materials as non ionomers (col. 12 line 5).

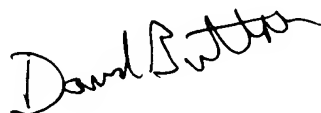
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Buttner whose telephone number is 703-308-2403. The examiner can normally be reached on Weekdays from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert Dawson can be reached on 703-308-2340. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.

DAVID J. BUTTNER
PRIMARY EXAMINER

D. Buttner/mn
June 10, 2003

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Buttner", written in dark ink.